

## What funding is available to communities during the siting process?

There are 3 types of funding available:

- Engagement funding
- Community investment funding
- Significant additional investment

The purpose of **Engagement Funding** is to ensure that anyone engaging in the siting process can do so without incurring costs. The consultation proposes that Engagement Funding is available during formative and constructive engagement. The intention is that Engagement Funding can be used by the community within the Search Area and later on the potential host community to fund activities to learn about geological disposal. It will also cover the formation and operating costs of the Formative Engagement Team and the Community Partnership. It will cover any costs associated with implementing the right of withdrawal and the test of public support. [See paragraphs 4.37 to 4.41 of Working with Communities Consultation]

The purpose of **Community Investment Funding** is to enhance a community's ability to benefit from a Geological Disposal Facility. Initially up to £1m per community per year will be available for communities during constructive engagement, rising to up to £2.5m per year per communities that move to deep borehole investigations. The consultation document sets out broad principles for the disbursement of the funding. It can be used to improve community well-being, enhance the natural and built environment and provide economic development opportunities. The Community Partnership will decide on the specific funding criteria within these broad parameters. Access to community investment funding will be through applications and a Community Investment Panel, made up of members of the Community Partnership. [See paragraphs 4.60 to 4.73 of Working with Communities Consultation].

For a community that decides, following a test of public support, to host a GDF **significant additional investment** will be available similar to other international GDF projects and capable of generating intergenerational benefits specific to the community that hosts the GDF.

## What is the role of local authorities in the process?

The consultation proposes that the principal local authorities should be invited to join both the Formative Engagement Team and the Community Partnership, but they are not obliged to do so. If they choose not to be involved they must be kept informed and make clear that they are content for engagement to continue without their involvement.

As members of the Community Partnership, they will decide to remain engaged in the siting process by not wishing to invoke the right of withdrawal through the Community Partnership. The process for invoking the right of withdrawal and the test of public support should be set out in the Community Agreement. The Community Agreement should also set out how the Community Partnership will take these and

other decisions, including voting mechanisms and whether votes require unanimity to be carried or whether a single relevant principle local authority can carry the motion with their vote.

Engagement funding may provide for an independent facilitator to mediate any disputes within the Community Partnership.

### **Why is the Government proposing to dispose of plutonium and spent fuel that is not yet declared as waste and may be of use in years to come?**

A type of higher activity radioactive waste which would comprise part of the inventory for disposal in a GDF is plutonium stocks. Plutonium stocks would be in a form suitable for long-term disposal (this may be following re-use and subsequently contained in spent nuclear fuel, immobilised, or a combination of both).

### **What is the purpose of the third party expert view mechanism?**

The third party expert view mechanism is being developed so that communities will be able access views from members of learned societies on contested and unresolved technical and/or scientific issues.

We do not envisage this being communities' first port of call for answering scientific and technical questions. Communities will receive and will be able to request information about geological disposal from different sources including RWM, Environment Agency, the Office of Nuclear Regulation, expert consultants, universities, and local experts. In addition the Community Partnership might commission research on a topic that is of concern to the community.

### **What happens if no community comes forward?**

As has been the case since 2008, the Government reserves the right to explore other approaches if it looks unlikely that a consent based process will work.

### **How will the views of those not living in the Search Area or the potential host community be considered?**

#### Working with Communities

The intention of the working with communities proposals is for the delivery body (RWM) to be held to account, tasked with providing communities with all the information they require and with listening and responding to views and concerns in an open and responsive way.

The current working with communities proposals allow for only those living in the potential host community to have a say on whether to proceed with a GDF through the Test of Public Support. The intention is that those who will be directly impacted by the development will get the final say on whether they are willing to host a GDF.

We are proposing that the potential host community would include all of the electoral ward areas in which the following are likely to be located:

- Surface and underground facilities
- Any associated development (as defined under the Planning Act 2008 in England) and any development to mitigate impacts
- Transport links from the geological disposal facility site to the nearest port, railhead or primary road network
- Direct physical impacts associated with construction and operation of the GDF.

If the potential host community boundary is near other local authority boundaries, consideration may be given to engaging people within neighbouring local authorities. They would not however, have a say in the test of public support.

### Planning

Neighbouring local authorities will be formally consulted as part of the development consent process.

The development consent process for nationally significant infrastructure projects places specific requirements on any organisation proposing to apply for consent to consult local communities, local authorities, statutory bodies, and other interested parties before any application for development consent is made. This ensures that the delivery body (RWM) consults widely during the siting process.

### **What are the implications of the Swedish Court decision?**

The Swedish Environmental Court has considered an application from SKB, the Swedish developer and issued an opinion to the Swedish Government. It has agreed to issues within the application relating to the Forsmark site, the rock, the buffer and the environmental impact statement. However, it has requested further information on the properties of the disposal canister. SKB are currently working to resolve this matter, developing further documentation as required. The information being prepared was already required for safety analysis of the project, and is simply being prepared earlier than was anticipated by SKB.

### **Who will be able to express an interest in the siting process?**

The consultation proposals allow for anyone to come forward initially. This includes local authorities, other public bodies, individuals, landowners, businesses, community groups. If following initial discussions with RWM, the interested party decides to proceed they will need to make their interest public, and with RWM start to build a Formative Engagement Team to begin the process of engaging with the community.

### **Who will be on the Community Partnership?**

The consultation document proposes that the Community Partnership should be designed to reflect as many different aspects of the relevant community as possible. The consultation document notes that the membership may therefore include principal local authorities (if they choose to join) and Local Enterprise Partnerships (if they choose to join), RWM and community members identified during formative engagement. They could be members of parish, town or community councils, residents, local community or voluntary organisations, businesses or local service providers.

### **How will the Community Partnership build understanding of the local area, issues and concerns?**

The Community Partnership should be reflective of the community, so should already have strong links to people and groups within the Search Area and later the potential host community. It is designed to facilitate discussions with the community and identify relevant information that people in the community in the Search Area need in relation to the siting process. The consultation proposals suggest that a Community Stakeholder Forum could be set up to provide outreach to people in the community more widely or that the Community Partnership might develop working groups to build knowledge and understanding of local issues and concerns.

### **Can the delivery body be reasonably expected to: be held to account, work in partnership, build confidence and deliver a GDF?**

Yes. The proposed policy framework is for the delivery body to work in partnership with communities in an open and transparent fashion. It can be held to account through its membership of the Community Partnership and through the terms of the Community Agreement, through which it will be tasked with providing communities with all the information they require and listening and responding to views and concerns in an open and responsive way. Working in an open and transparent fashion and being responsive to community issues and concerns should help build trust and confidence.

RWM has a lot of expertise in this field; it is home to decades of UK research and experience in radioactive waste management, with extensive links to international GDF programmes around the globe and to the International Atomic Energy Agency and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s Nuclear Energy Agency.